

The James Caird Society Newsletter

Issue 26 • Summer 2020



Shackleton's leadership in action

New Logo, new Website

The main news for the Society this year has been the design of a modern logo and an updated dynamic website to match. The eye-catching design was put together by Carl and Gérald of Lamerton Creative, advised and encouraged by members of the JCS Committee! The Committee is very grateful to the team at Lamerton for their hard work, professionalism – and patience – and for the creative flair which has resulted in a design which, in our opinion, retains the traditional appeal of the doughty *James Caird* and yet brings the Society and its work neatly into the 2020s and beyond. We hope you agree ...

We would also of course like to thank Roddy Dunnett, son of the Society's Founder, Harding McGregor Dunnett, who ran the original website for many years and continues to play an active role along with Steve Scott-Fawcett in running and advising the Sir Ernest H. Shackleton Appreciation Society on Facebook (a link to which is on the website under About the Society > Who We Are)

If you have not yet looked at the website, please do. Your comments and suggestions are always very welcome. The web address remains the same: www.jamescairdsociety.com

Moving towards Shackleton's final expedition

During the winter of 1919/20 Shackleton earned a living on the lecture tour, giving two lectures a day, six days a week. But, true to form, the *wanderlust* began to bite once more.

'I feel I am no use to anyone unless I am outfacing the storm in wild lands', he wrote in 1919.

He was desperate to undertake yet another Polar exploration but this time his sights were set to the north. An area to the north of Alaska and to the west of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago was where Shackleton planned his next expedition, but he needed support from several quarters.

In March 1920, just over 100 years ago, his plans were approved by the Royal Geographical Society and also supported by the Canadian government. Later in the year he met an old friend from Dulwich College John Quiller Rowett who agreed to help fund the project. Preparations for what ultimately was to become the Quest Expedition were under way.

See the opposite page for the continuation of the story.



The 2020 AGM
will be held at Dulwich College
on Friday 20 November 2020,
starting at 5.30pm.

Following the meeting there will
be, Covid-bergs allowing, a talk
by Skip Novak, entitled 'The
South Sandwich Islands and
South Georgia – where there is
science there is adventure'
Dinner will be served in the
Great Hall at 8pm

We very much hope that this
event will take place but will of
course be following government
advice on the Covid situation.
Please check on the website for
the latest information.

A date for the May Dinner 2021
is yet to be confirmed.
Please check website.

Elsewhere in this issue:

Page 3 Final Quest Expedition

Page 4 News & Views

Page 5 Supporting projects

Pages 6 and 7 A new *James Caird* in
the making!

Page 8 Museums meet

Page 9 A puzzle and an update

Page 10 Shackleton's poetry

Page 11 Reflections

Page 12 About the Society

Launching The James Caird

Final Quest Expedition: 7–27 February 2022

Few cabins remain! Plans are moving forward at a cracking pace for the James Caird Society's *Shackleton's Final Quest Expedition*. The cancellation of Antarctic cruises during the winter of 2020/21 has result in increased demand: bookings have been robust!

For those who would like to visit Montevideo, a two-night stay in the city is planned, followed by a Tango Night in Buenos Aires. A visit to the Naval museum and also the UNESCO Heritage site of Colonia del Sacramento will be a wonderful send off before flying to Ushuaia. The original Holy Trinity Church, where Shackleton's body lay in state, is now sadly gone but a visit to the replica near the site is on the agenda and a meeting with the archivist is planned.

This three-night extension will precede our epic voyage and will be a wonderful send-off before flying to Ushuaia for two nights (included in the price) at the glorious Arakur Resort and Spa Hotel. The hotel is in Cerro Alarkén Natural Reserve, a short 12-minute shuttle from the centre of Ushuaia. It has spectacular views of the Beagle Channel which can be enjoyed from the heated swimming pools, and a special Heroic Age dinner is planned before we board MS *Seaventure* on 7 February 2022, sailing towards our first port of call, the Falklands. Our time in Port Stanley will be crowned by a reception on board for the Governor of the Falklands, Nigel Phillips CBE and his wife Emma.

After Stanley the next stop will be South Georgia and a rare opportunity, if the weather gods permit, to sail down King Haakon Bay past McCarthy Island and on to Peggotty Bluff. An extended time will be given in Grytviken, as it is often difficult to fit in all that is offered – from the traditional whisky shot in the cemetery to the leg-stretcher walk to Hope Point, the site of the original Shackleton Memorial Cross. A special church service in the Whalers' Church in Grytviken will take place.

From South Georgia we shall head South and, if the weather is kind, we hope to see Lambert Island named after JCS Chairman Nick Lambert, who not only saw it for the first time in 2014 but actually set foot on it. Again, Elephant Island will be weather dependent. Sailing on, more excitement awaits ... Antarctica!

Early Booking Incentive of 15% discount on the published prices through 01/31/21. For further information and all prices – including the Montevideo extension – please contact info@ice-tracks.com

And we will be happy to call you.



Above: The Whalers' Church, Grytviken
Below: MS *Seaventure*



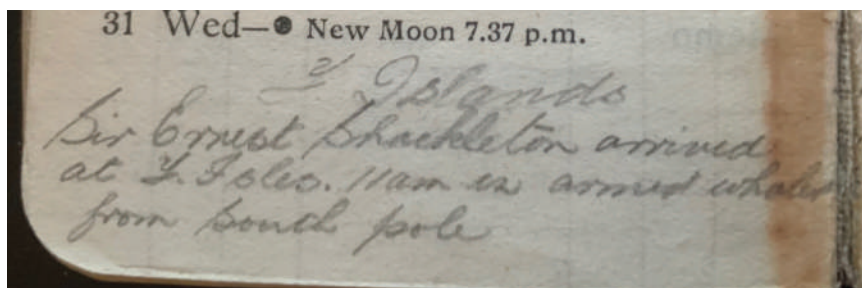
A new picture

A fascinating discovery has been made by Guy Story who wrote to the Newsletter earlier this year:

'Following my mother's death I discovered a large photo album and diaries for 1916-19 which belonged to my Great-uncle John Charles Robinson, who was a Writer 2nd Class RN on board AMS (Armoured Merchant Ship) *Avoca* from 13 March 1916 until 1919. Although he died when I was only three, I heard many tales from my mother about how he had been a keen photographer and had been allowed to set up a dark room on board ship. She also stated that he had somehow been involved in Shackleton's 'rescue'.

The ship's log shows that AMS *Avoca* was in Port Stanley from 26 May-4 June 1916. On going through my mother's album, I found this photo of Sir Ernest Shackleton in the Falkland Islands taken by my Great-uncle (I believe) and this corresponds with the diary entries for 31 May and 1 June 1916. I believe that this is an unknown photograph of Shackleton so I thought it might be of interest to the Society.'

It certainly is! Thank you.



Grave work

David Mearns, JCS member and world authority on the recovery of sunken ships, has been turning his hand to a more land-based activity recently. Learning from the Ernest H Shackleton Appreciation Facebook page that Emily Shackleton's grave had fallen into disrepair, he at once took up his gardening tools and hastened to the rescue. The before and after pictures are shown here. Emily, who died in 1936, 14 years after Sir Ernest, is buried in the churchyard of St Giles, Coldwatham, West Sussex. Their daughter Cecily shares her mother's grave while her father of course lies almost 8000 miles away in South Georgia.



Shackleton poster

We are delighted to announce that we have recently re-discovered this poster (pictured) which was created some years ago by American artist, designer and illustrator John Hyatt, an ardent admirer of Sir Ernest's achievements. John has very kindly sent us the artwork for this magnificent creation and the plan is to have copies printed to be used for educational purposes, or simply as works of art for the wall! All proceeds from the sale of these posters will go towards the Society's charitable work – which is of course to support projects, usually expeditions, which emulate the spirit of Shackleton, in particular of the Endurance Expedition.

Full details of the poster will be available on the website when post-Covid normality has been restored. Or you can contact us via email – see back page.

2034 – a novel for the future

Readers will be interested to hear of a forthcoming book by Italy-based member Rino Tringale which has been inspired by the spirit of perseverance which marked out the great heroic adventurers and explorers of yesteryear, in particular Shackleton. *2034* is a work about a future – and better – world where Shackleton's style of leadership is emulated, and humankind eventually understands the value of knowing when to go back and when to move forward – in a positive way. It is hoped the work will be published, in both English and Italian, by the anniversary of Shackleton's death in January 2022.



ReQuest 2021

As reported in last year's Newsletter, a team of Scouts – eight from Kent and two from Scotland – are planning an Antarctic Research Project which will take place during winter 2021/22, 100 years after two Scouts sailed on Shackleton's final Quest Expedition. The ReQuest team will be sailing on the barque *Europa*, one of the best-known tall ships, from South America to Port Lockroy in Antarctica. On 5 May 2020, precisely 600 days before the party is due to set sail, they hit the halfway mark with their fundraising.

£55,000 raised, £55,000 to go...

Hence the celebration of their mascot, Shackleton the Penguin (pictured) For more details about the Project, please contact JCS member Alan Noake at alan.noake@kentscouts.org.uk



An exact replica?

Back in 1997 Jarlath Cunnane took part in a daring expedition named *South Arís* to repeat the epic *James Caird* voyage. They sailed in a vessel of similar dimensions to *James Caird*, based on the lines of a double ended Achill yawl, built by Jarlath and named *Tom Crean*.

The voyage, accompanied 'out of sight' by Skip Novak on *Pelagic*, was abandoned after 400 miles thanks to 60 knot winds, mountainous seas and several capsize: '... there is nothing more disconcerting than being in a boat upside down looking down at green seas 1500 metres deep!'

23 years on Jarlath has decided to build a replica of the *James Caird* that won't be tested in those southerly oceans! Other expedition replicas built have all been adapted in certain ways for safety and strength reasons (Trevor Potts's *Sir Ernest Shackleton* in 1994, Arved Fuchs's *James Caird 11* in 2001, Tim Jarvis's *Alexandra Shackleton* in 2013) This one is being built exactly to the original: more like the *James Caird* than the *James Caird* itself?

Jarlath Cunnane takes up his story:

By building a genuine replica of the *James Caird*, I hope to learn more of Shackleton, and the part played by master craftsman McNeish, who was badly treated by Shackleton in denying him the Polar medal. Craftsmen of McNeish's abilities are often 'difficult' as I understood in my construction career. He was understandably worried that once *Endurance* had sunk he would no longer be paid. This was the practice those days after a shipwreck. When Shackleton stated his wages would be paid he continued working, though Shackleton never forgave him for his defiance.

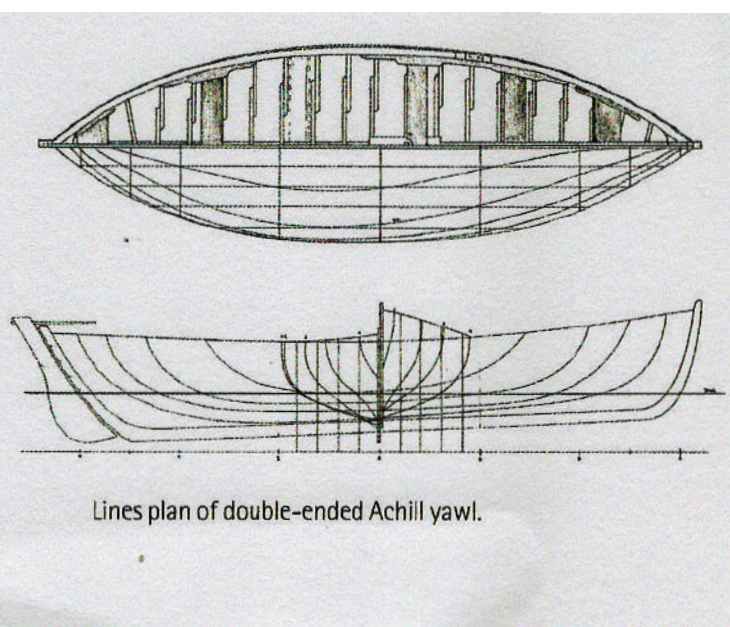
What is genuine replica? What is the exact length of *James Caird*? Shackleton in *South* says it measured 20ft x 6 ft. Worsley says 'it was built to my orders in Poplar, London ... 22 feet 6 inches long, with a 6 foot beam'. Strangely he also says it was clinker built when it is in fact carvel.

McNeish raised the topsides by 15 inches which no doubt increased its length and beam. The photograph of

the chippy at work (see pic) shows the stem and stern bands detached to allow the posts to be raised. One can also see the ribs are extended to support the additional planking. In King Haaken Bay McNeish describes cutting up the *James Caird* for firewood, presumably the upper additions only.

In 1968, safely back in England, the *James Caird* was repaired by Cory's Barge works at Charlton, where a shipwright repaired the hull, replaced the strakes removed at King Haaken Bay, supplied masts, yard and rudder. So how much is original? Probably the original hull but the sail-plan is doubtful. The painting by Marston *In Sight Of Our Goal* may be the best guess at the sail-plan.

To check on timber sizes and other details I visited Dulwich College and can confirm the final answer on the size: just under 23 feet 2 inches long overall, and 6 feet 10 inches beam. From drawings I lofted the lines full size on plywood sheets. I elected to build the hull upside down, as I am no longer able to crawl under boats. With 13 temporary building frames set at 500mm centres,



Plans of the Achill yawl



The Tom Crean



temporary stringers were attached. All this framework will be removed when the hull is turned over. Then I began the actual building – the ribs are steam bent and temporarily attached to the stringers with cable ties. The steam bent ribs required lively work to ensure they were quickly removed from the steam box, bent and attached to the stringers while they were still flexible. The ribs extend from gunwale to gunwale and cross under the keelson. Later as the planking progresses the ribs will be permanently riveted to the planks with copper nails and rooves.

The coronavirus stopped all travel and deliveries and I happily self-isolated in my workshop. Fortunately, I had sufficient timber in stock to make a start to the building frame. Hopefully soon I will be able to get the planking, complete the project and report more fully.

Above: The James Caird

Right: the new James Caird, ribs in place

Below: the new James Caird, temporary frames





The Historic Dockyard Museum, Stanley



The jetty at Rio Seco

Ireland meets the Falklands

Three Irish members of the Society (Joe O'Farrell, Geraldine and Jim McAdam) took advantage of Jim's recent five-week working trip to the Falkland Islands to establish a link between the Historic Dockyard Museum in Stanley and the (rebranded) Shackleton Museum in Athy, Co Kildare, Ireland. The Falklands have an important connection with both Sir Ernest and his son Edward (Lord Shackleton) in very different ways, and hold the Shackleton legacy and heritage close to their hearts. We are all well versed in the story of Sir Ernest's reaching the Falklands in May 1916 with the express purpose of informing the outside world of their fate and then trying to mount attempts to reach the men stranded on Elephant Island. Lord Shackleton is more recently remembered as the leader of the 1977 team which produced an economic analysis of the future for the Islands: the now famous Shackleton Report. This is still regarded as unquestionably the most important report ever produced on the Falklands. Politically, socially and economically it paved the way for the Islands we now know – a viable, democratic, economically independent and vibrant community in the South Atlantic.

Joe used the opportunity to give two public lectures in the Museum in Stanley. One on Sir Ernest Shackleton, mentioning his birthplace, the development of the Museum in Athy and how Shackleton can be a link between the Falklands and Ireland. The second was on Shackleton's Forgotten Men – The Ross Sea Party. The audience were particularly keen to hear first-hand news on the progress on the restoration of Shackleton's Cabin in Ireland (See JCS Newsletter 2018). Both lectures were well advertised locally and were completely sold out long before the event, such was the interest.

In their meetings with the Museum staff in Stanley – all of whom are hugely enthused by the formation of the link – the Irish trio stressed how Stanley and Athy can 'punch above their weight' (in the context of their relatively isolated locations and small populations) in the hierarchy of Polar institutions, and how both will in time

undoubtedly be highlights on any map of the world's Polar museums. They explored how the Shackleton link can be promoted and cemented jointly.

The Historic Dockyard Museum, Stanley

The Falklands remain the gateway to British interests in Antarctica. Apart from the early important visits of James Clark Ross in 1838, followed by various other Polar expeditions including Shackleton himself as mentioned above (and see Page 4), there are close links with Operation Tabarin and the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey and subsequently the British Antarctic Survey. Nowadays the Falklands are a popular stopping off point for cruise ships – many of which include it in the Antarctic cruise circuit. These cruises attract around 60,000 visitors per year, most of whom spend a day in Stanley with many visiting the Museum. Five years ago the Falkland Islands Government invested in remodelling the historic dockyard area on the Stanley seafront as a museum site which aims to celebrate the cultural heritage of the Falklands and their links with the outside world.

On our way back to Ireland in mid-March we had planned to spend two weeks in Southern Patagonia visiting sites of historical interest. Unfortunately, our exit routes by land and air from southern Chile and Argentina were rapidly closing because of Coronavirus and we just managed to get out – with hours to spare! We still managed to visit the tumbledown jetty at Rio Seco where the *Yelcho* put in to announce its arrival in Punta Arenas with the rescued *Endurance* crew, the room where Shackleton gave his second lecture on the Endurance Expedition, the replica bow of the *Yelcho* in Puerto Williams (the original has now been moved to Punta Arenas) and, of course, the very grand Shackleton Bar in the Hotel Jose Noguiera in Punta Arenas! We were probably the last European visitors there – everything locked down virtually the next day!

Jim, Joe and Geraldine

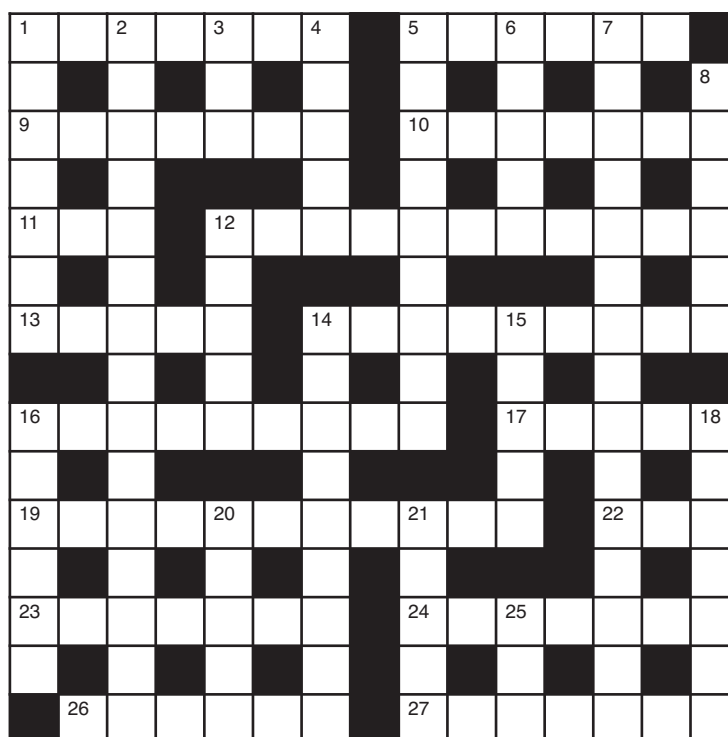
Polar puzzle

ACROSS

1. That was a brilliant party (4, 1, 2)
5. Needed on the ice for photographs (6)
- 9 and 10. Alma mater (7, 7)
11. Found among e.g. gentoo's feet (3)
12. Scottish angler who shared the life story (5, 6)
13. Used by 12A to tempt prey? (5)
14. A stoic vessel (9)
16. A rise for an island stop off (9)
17. Mother meets holy people by ship's spars (5)
18. Sky chump ahoy mixed compiler's dog's dinner (2, 5, 4)
22. A tippie in every expedition? (3)
23. The other party on Friends' character's body of water (4, 3)
24. Beginning to look for a way through the ice (7)
26. A boaty might, with rhyme and reason (6)
27. Photographer and model – together (7)

DOWN

1. Sea or seal (7)
2. A literary device – for McNeish? (9, 6)
3. Friend from Paris (3)
4. The Boss's forebears may have found this writing in a hot dog hamper (5)
5. Blackboro did at first (5, 1, 3)
6. You won't catch these on the way to South Georgia (5)
7. Get the the Oriental plates out; Sir Ernest is coming to tea! (3, 5, 7)
8. A dab hand with a brush (6)
12. Where there are ninjas on board you will find a hero (5)
14. Crazy Limey Army waited at home (5, 4)



15. Chart once again (5)
16. Confused I dream of respect (6)
18. Cricketers taunts can be a drag (7)
20. Russia calls our President (5)
21. To go with greens? Or come from Green? (5)
25. Listen to a Cockney, almost close (3)

(Answers on page 11)

From Fire to Ice

JCS members will remember from previous newsletters that we have been supporting the planning stages for the inspirational Fire to Ice Expedition which was conceived by Rob Small who suffered tremendous burns following an accident in Zanzibar in 2010. The original objective of the expedition was for Rob and fellow burns survivors to walk to the South Pole to show that life-changing injuries are not necessarily limiting. You can still do virtually anything you want if you are really determined. During the initial preparation, it became clear that the extreme nature and danger of this expedition meant that participants were hard to come by. Rethinking how the expedition might work meant taking a different direction. As new people were added to the team and the doctors came on board Fire to Ice became (at least in part) a medical research expedition! During the preparation years that followed Rob and his team experienced a mixture of excitement, hope, happiness, doubt, pain and frustration.

Sadly, Covid-19 has distilled all those emotions into disappointment; the project has now been abandoned.

Rob describes his feelings: As I look back at the posts, pictures and videos over the last eight years, I do so with a big smile. I won't rake over every single detail of our incomplete journey and all the bumps in the road, but very sadly Covid-19 has halted the remaining momentum in our project and made it impossible for us to continue in our current form. Of course, Shackleton's own Antarctic expedition was unfinished and so our mission to complete his journey has also been stopped, in this case by the pandemic that has caused suffering the world over. Many disappointments arise from this inevitable cancellation, but any feelings of failure are more than outweighed by the extraordinary generosity, encouragement, and belief extended to me while trying to make this experiment happen. I will hold on to that spirit while developing Plan B. Watch this space! All that remains is for me to say a huge thank you to everybody who has sponsored, mentored, helped, followed and supported us over the years including Alexandra Shackleton and The James Caird Society.

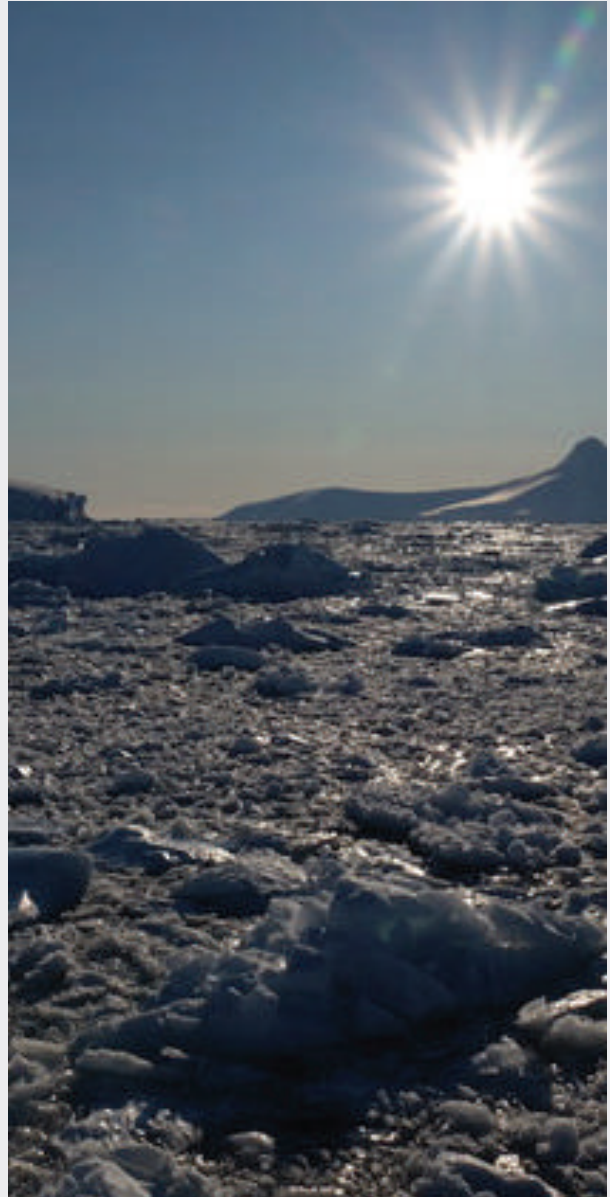
Shackleton's poetry

Shackleton's poetic insights are well-known and recorded but the Newsletter team, inspired by Jan Piggott, discovered in his poetry from another century the two over-riding expressions of 2020:

We are all in this together – a sense of oneness with the rest of the world, as boundaries shrink and communication expands:

FANNING ISLE by E H S

Surf-bound, lonely islet,
Set in a summer sea,
Work of a tiny insect,
A lesson I learn from thee.
For to your foam-white shores
The deep sea cables come.
Through slippery ooze, by feathery palms,
Flies by the busy hum
Of the nations linked together,
The young, with the older lands,
A moment's space, and the Northern tale
Is placed in Southern hands,
So, green isle small and lonely,
I find as I think it o'er
That your place in the scheme of nations
Shows to me more and more
That every deed of Nature
Helps to the finished plan,
That starts with the lonely worm
And will end in the perfect man:
That the smallest leads to the greatest,
And your worth may now be seen
As the pulsing heart of the ocean
Goes by your island green.



*Neumayer Channel,
Antarctic peninsula, January 2016
© David McLean*

And the exact opposite as we spent weeks in isolation

In a solitary hut on a lonely isle
Beneath a smoke capped height,
Hemmed in by the ice that grips us awhile
We wait in the long dark night.

Reflections on Antarctica during Lockdown

The present global situation with COVID-19 has given many cause, opportunity and time to reflect. Experience of Antarctica, the seventh continent, whether at first or second hand has always put our lives in a broader perspective. There are clearly no easy answers to this complex thinking process but the following quotations may help to illuminate our thoughts and look at the world from a different perspective.

'At a time when it's possible for 30 people to stand on the top of Everest in one day, Antarctica still remains a remote, lonely and desolate continent. A place where it's possible to see the splendours and immensities of the natural world at its most dramatic and, what's more, witness them almost exactly as they were, long, long before human beings ever arrived on the surface of this planet. Long may it remain so.'

Sir David Attenborough

'The albatross hit the top and canted her soft belly to the storm, and made a screaming banked peel-out downwind and over the other side. I don't know if anyone else on the ship saw her. To me, she was a visitation. Not harbinger or annunciation, but a simple reminder of a world that worked, that was at home with itself and friends with storm.'

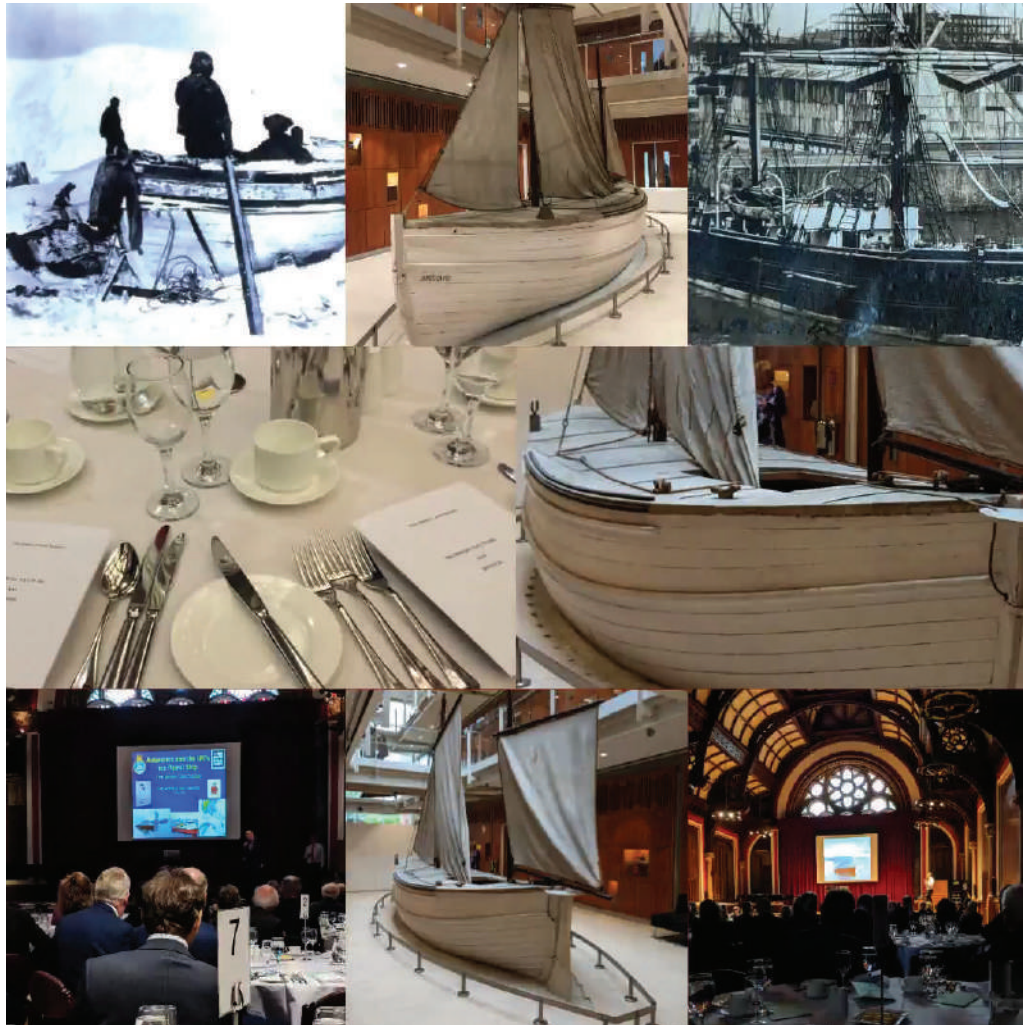
Peter Heller, author of

The Whale Warriors: The Battle at the Bottom of the World to Save the Planet's Largest Mammals

Roger Slade, JCS Committee member.

Reflections on the cancelled May Dinner

Montage of previous James Caird Society Dinners from Susan Rose



Crossword answers

Across

- 1. What a do | 5. Lights
- 9 & 10. Dulwich College
- 11. Egg | 12. James Fisher
- 13. Lures | 14. Endurance
- 16. Ascension | 17. Masts
- 18. My Husky Chop | 22. Rye
- 23. Ross Sea | 24. Opening
- 26. Floaty | 27. Hurleys

Down

- 1. Weddell | 2. Allegoric Chisel
- 3. Ami | 4. Ogham
- 5. Lacks a den | 6. Galei
- 7. The China Service
- 8. George | 12. Jason
- 14. Emily Mary
- 15. Remap | 16. Admire
- 18. Sledges | 20. Sasha
- 21. Hoosh | 25. Ear

What the Society does

The James Caird Society was founded by Harding McGregor Dunnett in 1994

The James Caird Society was established in 1994 and is a registered charity. It is the only institution that exists to preserve the memory, honour the remarkable feats of discovery in the Antarctic and commend the outstanding qualities of leadership associated with the name of Sir Ernest Shackleton, KCV0 (1874-1922), especially during the ill-fated but glorious Endurance Expedition.

How Shackleton maintained his men's morale while stranded for months on the ice and when there seemed no hope of rescue, eventually bringing all of them home safe and sound, is now seen as an achievement unique in the history of exploration.

The Society's main purpose relates to honouring that achievement and preserving the memory of Sir Ernest's unique qualities of leadership. A vital part of the Society's role also includes supporting projects, usually expeditions, which emulate the spirit of Shackleton and as such are deemed to have put Shackleton's Leadership into Action...

Membership application form

I wish to become a member of the James Caird Society paying a subscription of (indicate as applicable):

- ☐ £55 for three years, or
☐ £100 for six years, or
☐ £20 annually (Payable only by bankers' order)
 Subscription year begins 1 July

(BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Name

Address

Postcode

Profession

Telephone

Email

Shackleton connection (if any)

Please photocopy this form or download it from our website. Single year applications (for UK residents only) must also include a completed Bankers' Order Form which can also be downloaded from our website. Cheques should be made payable to The James Caird Society and should be sent, with the relevant form, to: Andy Kinniburgh, 43 Prideaux Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 2NB. Tel: 07831 747479 and email info@jamescairdsociety.com

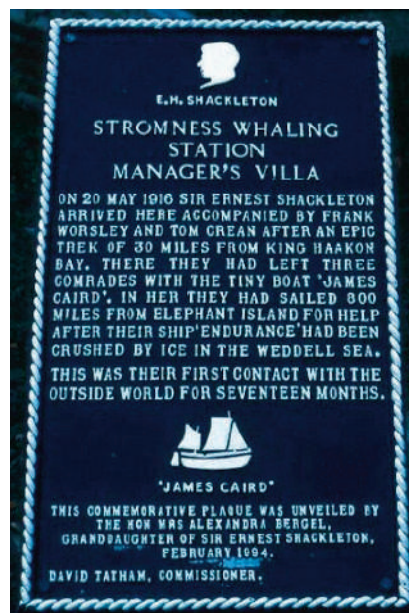
UK taxpayers are urged to take advantage of Gift Aid which allows the Society tax relief on subscription. A Gift Aid Declaration Form is available on the website.

Keep in touch ...

The Society communicates with members by email in preference to post (snail mail) where possible. Overseas members receive the newsletter and invitations only by email. Please keep us updated with your email address to our membership secretary, Tony Parker, at membership@jamescairdsociety.com.

If your latest subscription is due or not yet paid please contact the membership secretary and send payment so that we can keep your records up-to-date.

Blasisch Giovanni, dedicated JCS member from Italy, has asked that we remind readers of the plaque on the Manager's Station in Stromness. Perhaps this is a timely reminder as our President The Hon Alexandra Shackleton tells me that visitors are no longer allowed to visit Stromness because of the danger from asbestos.



The James Caird Society 2020

President: The Hon Alexandra Shackleton
 Chairman: Rear Admiral Nick Lambert
 Vice Chairman: John Bardell
 Hon Secretary: Dr Andy Kinniburgh
 Hon Treasurer: Tony Parker
 Committee: Steven Scott-Fawcett, David McLean, Roger Slade, Nick Smith

Contact details

Information: info@jamescairdsociety.com
 Newsletter: newsletter@jamescairdsociety.com
 Membership: membership@jamescairdsociety.com

The James Caird Society, Dulwich College, London SE21 7LD
 Registered Charity No. 1044864
 Telephone: 01580 714944
 Website: www.jamescairdsociety.com
 Email: info@jamescairdsociety.com

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